

**III. REMARKS**

The present Amendment and Response is filed in response to the Final Office Action mailed on November 10, 2004. Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's determination that claim 39 is allowable over all art of record. As amended, claims 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 13, 17, 19, 20, 21, 30, 31, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, and 44 are pending in the application. Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83 (a) for not showing the mechanical interlocking feature of claims 43 and 44. Claims 43 and 44 have been canceled, without prejudice, thereby rendering the objection to the drawings as moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the 37 CFR 1.83 (a) objection to the drawings.
2. Claims 43 and 44 are rejected under 35 USC 112-1<sup>st</sup> paragraph as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claims 43 and 44 have been canceled, without prejudice, thereby rendering the claim rejection as moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the 35 USC 112-1<sup>st</sup> paragraph rejection with respect to claims 43 and 44.
3. Claim 44 is rejected under 35 USC 112-2nd paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. As noted above, claim 44 has been canceled, without prejudice, rendering the claim rejection as moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the 35 USC 112-2nd paragraph rejection to claim 44.
4. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 12, 13, 19, 21, 30, 31, 35, 36, 37, and 41-44 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Furuya et al. (JP 08-223889) and Kawashima (US 4678616).

Claims 1, 35, 43, and 44 have been canceled, without prejudice. Claims 2, 4, 10, 12, 13, 30, 31, 36, 37, and 41 have been amended, without prejudice, to depend from allowed claim 39, and are now allowable in view of at least the dependency. Claims 5, 19, 21, and 42, which depend directly or indirectly from allowed claim 39, are allowable in view of at least the dependency. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the 35 USC 103(a) rejections of claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 12, 13, 19, 21, 30, 31, 35, 36, 37, and 41-44.

5. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Furuya et al. (JP 08-223889) and Kawashima (US 4,678,616), in further view of Kageyama et al. (US 6,369,484). Claim 8 has been amended, without prejudice, to depend from allowed claim 39, and is allowable in view of at least the dependency. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the 35 USC 103(a) rejection of claim 8.

6. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Furuya et al. (JP 08-223889) and Kawashima (US 4,678,616), in further view of Marsal (US 2,645,732). Claim 17 has been amended, without prejudice, to depend from allowed claim 39, and is allowable in view of at least the dependency. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the 35 USC 103(a) rejection of claim 17.

7. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Furuya et al. (JP 08-223889) and Kawashima (US 4,678,616), in further view of Adler (US 5,850,141). Claim 20 depends from claim 19, which depends from claim 4, which now depends from allowed claim 39. Claim 20 is now allowable in view of at least the dependency. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the 35 USC 103(a) rejection of claim 20.

8. Claim 38 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Furuya et al. (JP 08-223889) and Kawashima (US 4,678,616), in further view of Uchiyama (JP 11-252,866). Claim 38 has been cancelled, without prejudice, thereby rendering the claim rejection as moot.

9. Claim 40 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Furuya et al. (JP 08-223889) and Kawashima (US 4,678,616), in further view of Hancock (US 3,983,431). Claim 40 has been amended, without prejudice, to depend from allowed claim 39, and is allowable in view of at least the dependency. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the 35 USC 103(a) rejection of claim 40.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly patentable over the prior art of record and are in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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